

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

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RO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7834
AMEMBASSY KABUL
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INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCEUR
CINCPAC
USDOCOSOUTH

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 6167

MILITARY ADDRESSEES FOR POLADS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PK, AF
SUBJECT: FORMER AFGHAN KING REPORTED TO HAVE MET CHINESE IN PAKISTAN

REF: A) ISLAMABAD 6021, B) KARACHI 3051 (NOTAL),
C) KARACHI 3064 (NOTAL)

1. OUR CONSULATE IN KARACHI HAS REPORTED TO US, FROM USUALLY
RELIABLE PRESS SOURCES, THAT FORMER AFGHAN KING ZAHIR SHAH
SECRETLY VISITED PAKISTAN LAUZ WEEK TO MEET WITH CHINESE
DEPUTY PREMIER KENG PIAO IN ABBOTTABAD. ACCORDING TO REPORT,
THE ONLY PAKISTAN POLITICIAN PERMITTED TO MEET ZAHIR
REPORTEDLY WAS TEHRIQ ISTIQLAL LEADER ASGHAR KHAN, WHOSE
HOME IS IN ABBOTTABAD; REPORT, WE NOTE, HAS LEAKED TO
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PRESS SOURCES VIA TEHRIQ CHANNELS BUT HAS NOT SURFACED
HERE IN ANY OF THE PAPERS. AFP ALSO HAS THE STORY, WE
UNDERSTAND.

2. COMMENT: WE FRANKLY HAVE OUR DOUBTS ABOUT THE REPORT.
WE WONDER, FOR INSTANCE, WHY ZAHIR SHAH WOULD HAVE TO COME
FROM ROME TO ABBOTTABAD TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THE CHINESE.

WE WONDER ALSO WHY THE GOP WOULD PERCEIVE IT IN PAKISTAN'S INTEREST TO BE INVOLVED, AS PAKISTAN WOULD HAVE HAD TO BE FOR SUCH A VISIT TO TAKE PLACE. WE CAN, HOWEVER, THINK OF LOTS OF REASONS WHY THE SOVIETS HERE MIGHT HAVE MANUFACTURED SUCH A STORY, GIVEN THE SUCCESS OF THE RECENT KENG PIAO VISIT.

3. NONETHELESS, IF AND WHEN THE STORY SURFACES, AND EVEN THOUGH IT MAY PROVE UNFOUNDED, IT WILL CERTAINLY FEED RUMORS THAT THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT, FOR ITS OWN REASONS, WILL BE PREPARED TO BELIEVE ABOUT GOP COMPLICITY IN AFGHAN EXILE ACTIVITY. AND IT COULD ALSO GIVE RISE TO NEW SPECULATION ABOUT THE FORMATION OF AN AFGHAN GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE HEADED BY THE FORMER KING.

4. FOR ROME: DO THE ITALIANS KEEP CLOSE ENOUGH TABS ON ZAHIR'S MOVEMENTS TO KNOW FOR SURE WHETHER OR NOT HE WAS IN ROME BETWEEN 16 AND 21 JUNE, THE DATES OF THE KENG PIAO VISIT TO PAKISTAN? HUMMEL

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